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WASHINGTON POST  
25 October 1986

## Sifting the Truth From Informers on LaRouche

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In the 1960s, Ryan Quade Emerson was an undercover FBI informer, working as a doorman at an organized crime gambling joint in Los Angeles. He recalls jotting down the heavy players' car license numbers in the restroom on toilet paper.

Later he worked undercover for the IRS at a Florida warehouse, stacking tomato crates so he could snap pictures of the operators of a big-time prostitution ring with headquarters in the offices upstairs.

Emerson, 54, a husky man who smokes a white meerschaum pipe, has been a virtual career informer for the past 20 years. But he said nothing quite prepared him for his latest foray—18 months inside the Leesburg-based movement of political extremist Lyndon H. LaRouche Jr.

Emerson secretly informed on LaRouche to the FBI, giving information that helped lead to the Oct. 6 federal indictment of 10 LaRouche associates on credit card fraud and obstruction-of-justice charges, as well as helping in the federal-state raids of LaRouche group headquarters in Virginia that day, according to Emerson and law enforcement sources.

But some law enforcement officials have said they still do not fully trust Emerson and are not sure where his loyalty rests. The Secret Service has concluded that while some of his information is useful, other information has been incorrect, law enforcement sources said.

In pursuing its two-year case against the LaRouche organization, the Justice Department has assembled a lineup of witnesses with some offbeat resumes.

Prosecutors investigating secretive organizations such as drug rings, underworld factions and extremist groups often must rely on informers with shady backgrounds who have been connected with the groups.

LaRouche group lawyers have said they will attack the credibility of the government's case if prosecutors rely on the individuals the government has identified so far, including more than 15 LaRouche "defectors"—former members of the group—who have given information to the FBI. Group lawyers also said they will challenge

the reliability of internal group documents that authorities said buttress their case.

Emerson and three other informers cited by the government worked for LaRouche's security squad, and each has freely admitted giving the group false "intelligence"—about topics ranging from supposed plots against LaRouche to the Mideast situation.

Besides Emerson, other government witnesses against the LaRouche group include:

■ **Roy Frankhouser**, a longtime leader of the Ku Klux Klan and other racist groups. Frankhouser, 47, of Reading, Pa., is a convicted dealer in stolen dynamite who worked for LaRouche for seven years as an "intelligence" expert. He told the FBI that he concocted wild stories from made-up CIA contacts to impress LaRouche.

■ **Forrest Lee Fick**, 34, another former Klansman from Reading, said he also made up stories for LaRouche's followers about intelligence contacts so he could keep his \$1,000-a-week security job with them. Until last year, Fick published a magazine filled with anti-Semitic essays referring to the glories of mystical Teutonic rites, according to Irwin Suall, head of the fact-finding division of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

■ **Mordecai Levy**, 26, leader of a militant Jewish organization who was expelled from the Jewish Defense League because its members believed that he was uncontrollable. Levy worked with LaRouche for four years, but Levy says he did so to gather information about LaRouche's alleged anti-Semitism.

Levy's group, the Jewish Defense Organization, recently circulated leaflets declaring LaRouche one of the "enemies of the Jewish people," and it has issued oblique warnings against LaRouche. "I wouldn't cry if he got hurt," Levy said in an interview.

**William Moffitt**, the attorney for **Jeffrey Steinberg**, a top LaRouche assistant indicted on obstruction charges, said the informers will cause trouble for the prosecutors. "Anytime the government's case revolves around putting on these types of people [like Frankhouser], the government's got problems, particularly since they are admitting they lied to my clients," Moffitt said. "It's a fascinating set of circumstances."

Law enforcement officials involved in the case said that despite the informers' pasts, officials believe that they are telling the government the truth. The officials said that in many cases, prosecution witnesses, such as Mafia members who turn informer, are not pristine.

"The [Justice Department] lawyers would love to be able to bring in a priest, a rabbi and a Boy Scout leader," said one official who has worked on the case. "But that's not who the LaRouche people chose to deal with."

Authorities have said publicly that Frankhouser, one of the 10 indicted, and Fick and Levy will be crucial in proving allegations that LaRouche group members obstructed a federal grand jury in Boston that investigated the group and returned the 117-count indictment. The charges center on allegations that the group used the credit card numbers of LaRouche contributors without authorization.

The indictment said that top LaRouche aides discussed ways to "quash" the probe and that they sent group members to Europe to avoid testifying. Four of the 10 defendants are at large, and authorities said they are believed to be in Europe. The other six, including Frankhouser, have pleaded not guilty.

Emerson, Frankhouser, Fick and Levy worked for LaRouche's so-called "security-intelligence" staff, which guards LaRouche, investigates the group's critics and carries out the group's most sensitive assignments.

LaRouche's security staff for years has continually issued alerts that LaRouche is about to be assassinated by stalking killers—supposedly sent by narcotics traffickers, the Libyans or international bankers—and it has dispensed elaborate details of alleged plots against the group.

LaRouche's organization was Marxist in the 1960s, but he shifted it to the right in the 1970s. Now its politics is difficult to categorize. LaRouche holds extreme sway over his 500 to 1,000 supporters, who unquestioningly follow his orders, according to former members and government officials. LaRouche says that the group is not a cult.

Also, the LaRouche group has assembled a worldwide network of contacts in governments and military agencies who have met regularly and exchanged information with the group's members, officials and former group associates said.

The group carried favor with officials of the National Security Council, the CIA and numerous other agencies, including scientists researching the Strategic Defense Initiative missile defense system. Most of the group's contacts with government officials ended in the last 18 months because of news stories about LaRouche, according to the group and former members.

U.S. government officials who have dealt with the LaRouche followers said that they treated them warily but that much of their "intelligence" was top flight. Norman Bailey, a former high economics official with the NSC and now a consultant, said two years ago that the LaRouche group had "one of the best private intelligence services in the world."

This subterranean work—trading gossip with government officials, pursuing wild conspiracy theories—was the bailiwick of the LaRouche security squad, according to former members and experts on the group. The four informers, including Emerson, were described as central players.

Law enforcement officials and friends portray Emerson as a man fascinated by the intrigue of law enforcement. Several years ago, he had his name legally changed, he said, while on an undercover assignment.

According to Emerson and some of his friends, he was a Los Angeles County sheriff's deputy in the 1960s and infiltrated neo-Nazi groups there. He later moved to Miami, where he attracted attention as a staff member of a legislative committee investigating organized crime and as a Dade County constable. A Florida newspaper described his skulking around alleys finding underworld witnesses and nicknamed him Miami's "crime spy."

Later he became an informer and undercover operative for numerous federal and local law enforcement agencies, newspapers and friends said.

"He envisioned himself as one man against crime," said James Savage, investigative editor at the Miami Herald, who has known Emerson for years. "He always felt he was doing important things for the country . . . He's sort of a Don Quixote."

Savage and other journalists and law enforcement officials who dealt with Emerson said that while some of his information was reliable, a lot of it was wrong. They said he has a penchant for exaggeration. Emerson

said for years that he worked for the CIA in the 1970s in Nevada, but former law enforcement officials discounted that.

Emerson, who until recently published newsletters on intelligence and terrorism, said he started work as a consultant with the LaRouche group around April 1985. That is, when he moved from Reno, Nev., to a small house outside Leesburg to work with the group.

He said he originally joined the LaRouche organization because he wanted to write a book exposing the group. But he said he felt comfortable taking its money—several hundred dollars for a few days' work in periodic assignments—because law enforcement friends had described the organization as "a conservative group" that does "really productive" research.

Emerson said that when he was first hired, one of his main tasks was to gather information about the federal investigation of the group. Emerson said he limited himself to calling reporters and wrote reports to the LaRouche group that purported to be based on information from inside sources. Like the three other informers, he said he often gave the group information from sources that he had made up.

Emerson said that he did not contact law enforcement authorities about the group until last May, a year after he had started work, when he called the FBI and started giving information.

Law enforcement agencies were split on whether he was a LaRouche plant, Emerson and officials said. The FBI eventually decided he was trustworthy, but the Loudoun County sheriff's department still mistrusts him, Emerson said. In dealing with Emerson, law enforcement agencies operated under the guidelines "get more than you give" and "confirm nothing," a law enforcement source said.

Spokesmen for the FBI's Alexandria office and the Loudoun County sheriff's office declined to comment on Emerson.

Emerson said LaRouche associates felt comfortable with him because they believed that he was, in their words, a "rogue intelligence agent."

But Emerson said that he was never entirely at ease in the group.

While he said he was impressed with the top security staff—he described various members as "sensitive," "gentle" and "warm," and LaRouche as "very dynamic" and "a prolific writer and thinker"—Emerson also noted some "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" behavior in the group.

The group first showed signs of political unpredictability in the mid-1970s, when it had its first dealings with another informer in the criminal case, Roy Frankhouser, according to former LaRouche followers.

The group hired Frankhouser in the late 1970s as "a good man on security," as LaRouche described him two years ago. Frankhouser was then a leader of the Pennsylvania Ku Klux Klan.

In court papers filed in connection with a case then under investigation, federal officials acknowledged that Frankhouser had been a federal informer in gun and munitions theft cases and that he had gone to Toronto around 1972 to infiltrate the Black September Arab terrorist group in an operation approved by the Nixon White House.

Frankhouser told LaRouche followers that he had top contacts inside many government agencies, including a CIA deputy director, from whom he could gather information, according to officials and former members.

But Frankhouser may have been lying about his sources—he told the FBI, with whom he started cooperating two days after he was indicted, that he made up the CIA sources to keep his well-paying job with the LaRouche group, authorities said.

In 1981, Frankhouser brought in Fick, a longtime friend and also an activist in extremist groups, to work with LaRouche. Fick joined in Frankhouser's cover story and pretended he too had government sources, authorities said.

Lawyers for the indicted LaRouche members said they will use Fick and Frankhouser's admissions of lying against them in court. An FBI agent testified at a hearing this month that the two had made up stories to feed to the LaRouche group. But the LaRouche organization—as well as former members and some experts on the LaRouche group—maintain Frankhouser did have some ties to the intelligence community.

Emerson said that LaRouche group leaders told him while he was associated with the organization that if the government prosecuted LaRouche associates, the group would stop the case by threatening to leak details of the group's dealings with the CIA and other agencies.

In an Oct. 9 statement, the LaRouche group said that if the government persists in the case, "This will soon not be our problem, but the CIA's."

The ex-Klansmen's claims are not the only matter in contention. There is also the controversy about Mordecai Levy.

Levy is a New York City accountant whose small militant group leads classes for Jews in marksmanship and self-defense. Levy has bragged about picking fistfights with people whom he believes are anti-Semitic, such as members of leftist and Arab groups.

Levy said he joined the LaRouche security team in 1980 as a consultant. He said he infiltrated meetings of LaRouche critics and followed the group's supposed enemies in cars.

Journalists and members of groups such as the Anti-Defamation League support Levy's contention that he was leaking information to them about the LaRouche organization during his four years with the group.

But some people raise questions about Levy's motivations.

"His role was enigmatic," said Suall of the Anti-Defamation League, who said he received information about LaRouche from Levy. Suall said that because he feared that Levy might be taking information back to LaRouche, "I was as certain as I could be not to give him information that would be useful to the LaRouche people . . . . I thought he was playing some sort of complex game."

Levy said he did nothing to help the LaRouche group and that almost all the information he gave it was made up. "They considered me a very high-level source" with intelligence contacts, Levy said, "but I gave them nonsense."

The LaRouche group said last year that while Levy was working with it, the group had "turned" Levy against his anti-LaRouche "controllers."

In a 1984 court deposition, LaRouche said that the intelligence Levy provided was "all highly accurate" and that when Levy gets in trouble, LaRouche gives him "fatherly" advice to calm down and "go hide out for a while."

As for Emerson, the veteran undercover operative said he is not afraid of the LaRouche followers, despite their reputation for harassing people who leave the group. "They're scaredy cats," Emerson said.

Now working on free-lance articles from his house in Purcellville, west of Leesburg, Emerson said his affiliation with LaRouche has hurt him financially. His latest newsletter recently folded, he said, because many people thought he was a LaRouche supporter. That, he said, is why he wants people to know that he was a government informer.

Emerson said he is philosophical about the way people respond to him. Undercover agents often are thought to be part of the group they are infiltrating, he said. "It goes with the territory."